



FEMA

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News Release

LAKE MARTIN DEBRIS REMOVAL COMPLETED

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. – The [U.S. Army Corps of Engineers](#) completed its final waterway debris removal mission Monday at [Lake Martin](#). The lake’s shores were littered with debris left in the wake of the [April 27 tornadoes](#), along with submerged hazardous materials in the water itself.

A local company, contracted by the Corps, loaded the first of 1,374 barges with debris on June 12 at Lake Martin after being tasked by the Alabama Emergency Management Agency and the Federal Emergency Management Agency to handle the effort. In all, more than 15,000 cubic yards of debris was [removed](#) from the lake, located on the Tallapoosa River near Alexander City.

“We are determined to remove all eligible debris from Alabama’s waterways,” said AEMA State Coordinating Officer Jeff Byard. “This is a significant event in eliminating public safety hazards that were created by the spring tornadoes from our state’s waterways.”

“Risk to public health and safety is significantly reduced with the removal of the debris,” said Wes Trammell, waterway debris removal mission manager for the Corps. “However, while the risk of boat traffic running over submerged debris has been reduced, we encourage the public to think about safety and exercise caution while on the lakes as there is always a chance that some smaller storm debris might be present.”

In northeast Alabama on the Coosa River, [Neely Henry Lake](#) was also hit by storms, which dumped more than 5,000 cubic yards of vegetation, bed frames, boats and even camper trailers in its waters. The Corps completed that debris removal mission on July 18.

“This debris cleanup wouldn’t have been accomplished if it wasn’t for our recovery partnership with our state partners and the Army Corps,” said FEMA Federal Coordinating Officer Michael Byrne. “Lake Martin and Neely Henry Lake are now safer for Alabama residents because of this cooperation.”

The debris removal at both lakes will benefit the overall health and water quality at those sites. But not all storm-related debris was removed.

“If debris was in a non-developed area and posed no safety hazard, we didn’t remove it,” Trammell said. “It will eventually become fish habitat.”

(MORE)

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